

The logo features the word "EMPOWERING" in a large, bold, black, sans-serif font. Below it, the word "FUTURES" is written in a smaller, all-caps, black, sans-serif font with wide letter spacing.

EMPOWERING
FUTURES

since
2015

STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT POLICY

Date Produced: August 2023

Review Date: September 2024

Next Review Date: September 2025

1. Aims, Scope, and Principles

This policy aims to set and maintain standards of conduct that Empowering Futures Alternative Education expects all staff & volunteers to follow.

By creating this policy, we aim to ensure our provision is an environment where everyone is safe, happy, and treated with respect.

Many of the principles in this code are based on our provision policies.

All the staff & volunteers at Empowering Futures have an influential position in the provision and will act as role models for pupils by continually and constantly demonstrating high standards of behaviour.

We expect that all the teachers and volunteers employed at Empowering Futures to act in accordance with the personal and professional behaviours set out in all or of policies including this Code of Conduct policy.

We expect all staff, volunteers, and governing bodies to also act with personal and professional integrity, respecting the safety and wellbeing of all pupils.

Our ethos is made explicit on our website and our Staff & Volunteer Handbook. We expect all our staff and volunteers to continually keep this ethos at the forefront of their minds and act in accordance with it.

Failure to comply with and follow our policies will result in disciplinary action being taken.

Please note that this code of conduct is not exhaustive. If situations arise that are not covered in this code, staff and volunteers will use their professional judgement to act in the best interests of the pupils and the provision.

2. Legislation and Guidance

In line with the statutory safeguarding guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' we should have a staff code of conduct, which should cover acceptable use of technologies, staff/pupil relationships and communications, including social media.

A copy of the 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' is also given to all staff and volunteers.

3. General Obligations

Staff set an example to pupils. They will:

- Maintain high standards in their attendance and punctuality
- Never use inappropriate or offensive language in the Provision
- Treat other staff members, volunteers and pupils with respect and dignity
- Show tolerance and respect for the rights of others
- Not undermine fundamental rights and values, including individual liberty, mutual respect, and tolerance of those from different cultures, ethnicities, faiths, and beliefs
- Express personal beliefs in a way that will not overly influence pupils, and will not exploit pupils' vulnerability or anything that may lead them to break the law
- Understand the statutory frameworks that they must act within
- Adhere to all our policies and procedures

4. Safeguarding

Staff and volunteers employed by Empowering Futures have a duty to safeguard pupils from harm, and to report any concerns they have to our DSL. This includes physical, emotional, and sexual abuse or neglect.

Staff MUST familiar themselves with the Empowering Futures Safeguarding policy and procedures and they must ensure that they are aware of the process and procedures to follow if they have concerns about a child.

All staff and volunteers are instructed to read the safeguarding policy and they also receive annual safeguarding training.

Our safeguarding policy is available in our Staff and Volunteer Safeguarding Handbook and our Empowering Futures Safeguarding Policy.

Physical Contact

Physical contact should never be secretive, or for the gratification of the adult, or represent a misuse of authority. If a member of staff, volunteer or student believes that an action could be misinterpreted, the incident and circumstances should be made clear to a senior member of staff.

Reporting Low-Level to High-Level Concerns about a Member of Staff (including Supply Staff or Volunteers), Visitors or Contractors

This section outlines our policy on low level concerns and allegations made against staff or volunteers working at Empowering Futures Alternative Education,

You can find the full details of our expectations in our 'Managing Allegations and low-level concerns relating to adults working within Empowering Futures Alternative Education Policy'.

It is the aim of the Provision to create and embed a culture of openness, trust and transparency in which our core values and expected behaviour are constantly actioned, monitored and reinforced by all staff.

The Provision promotes an open and transparent culture in which ALL concerns about staff or volunteers working in or on behalf of Empowering Futures (including supply staff) are taken seriously and dealt with promptly and appropriately.

All staff and volunteers should be clear about the professional boundaries and standards (outlined in this and the associated policy mentioned above) we expect and act within these boundaries and in accordance with our ethos.

Please read our 'Safeguarding Policy' and our 'Staff & Volunteer Safeguarding Handbook' which gives more details on our staff and volunteer expectations when it comes to behaviour and professional boundaries.

A low-level concern would be referred to the LADO and be taken very seriously. It is when a staff member behaves in a way that is not consistent with our staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of the Provision.

Examples of such behaviour could include:

- Being over friendly with children
- Having favourites
- Becoming friends with a current or recent pupil on any social media platform
- Taking pictures of pupils on their mobile phone
- Engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area of the school
- Using inappropriate sexualised, intimidating, or offensive language

It is important that any such concerns are shared with a Senior Member of Staff and recorded and dealt with appropriately. It might be that a staff member has a 'nagging doubt' about something that they have seen or heard, and staff and staff are regularly reminded of the importance of reporting these concerns and of the need to adhere to the staff code of conduct.

The Provision will:

- Ensure staff are clear about what appropriate behaviour is and confident about what this looks like in terms of teacher-pupil relationships. This is addressed through staff induction, safeguarding training and regular updates

- Ensure staff feel confident to share low-level concerns with a Senior Member of Staff by creating a culture of openness, transparency, and trust
- Address unprofessional behaviour and support the individual to correct it at an early stage
- Provide a responsive, sensitive, and proportionate handling of such concerns when they are raised
- Identify any weakness in the school safeguarding procedures through the annual review

Sharing Concerns

Concerns should be reported to a Senior Member of the Provision. If the concern is about a Senior Member of Staff, it should be reported to the LADO.

The provision encourages staff to come forward and self-refer if they have found themselves in a situation that could be misinterpreted or if they feel they have behaved in a way that would be considered below the expected standard of the Provision.

If the concern relates to a person employed by a supply agency, contractor or volunteer the concern should be shared with a Senior Member of Staff and the supply agency so that a potential pattern of inappropriate behaviour can be identified.

More detail can be found in our 'Managing Allegations and low-level concerns relating to adults working within Empowering Futures Alternative Education Policy'.

5. Health & Safety

All Provision staff have a duty to:

- Read the Provisions Health & Safety Policy
- Take part in our health & safety induction
- Comply with the Provisions health and safety arrangements
- Take reasonable care of their own and other people's health and safety
- Leave the classrooms and other areas of the Provision in a reasonably tidy and safe condition
- Supervise pupils and advise them on how to use equipment safely
- Report practices, equipment or physical conditions that may be hazardous to a Senior Member of Staff
- Follow the accident reporting procedures (detailed in the Health & Safety Policy and the Staff & Volunteer Handbook)
- Contribute to and highlight any gaps in the Provision risk assessment

6. Staff/ Pupil Relationships

Staff must observe boundaries with pupils that are appropriate to their professional position. They must act in a fair and transparent way that would not lead anyone to reasonably assume they are not doing so.

If staff members and pupils must spend time on a one-to-one basis, staff will ensure that:

- This takes place in a public place that others can access
- Others can see into the room
- A DSL, colleague or a Senior Member of Staff knows this is taking place

Staff should avoid contact with pupils outside the Provision hours.

Personal contact details should not be exchanged between staff and pupils. This includes social media profiles.

If a staff member is concerned at any point that an interaction between themselves and a pupil may be misinterpreted, this should be reported in line with Section 4 above.

7. Communication and Social Media

Provision staff's social media profiles should not be available to pupils. If they have a personal profile on social media sites, they should not use their full name, as pupils may be able to find them.

We would suggest that staff members should consider using a first and middle name instead and set public profiles to private.

Staff and volunteers should be aware that they leave themselves open to a charge of professional misconduct if images of a member of staff in a compromising situation are made available on a public profile by anyone.

Staff should not make any attempt to contact and have conversations with pupils or their parents via social media or any other means outside of the Provision, to develop any sort of a relationship. They must not make any effort to find pupil's or parents social media profiles.

If a student does gain access to the profile of a member of staff by fraudulent means (impersonation or hacking) Senior Leadership should be informed immediately.

Staff must deny current or recent students access to their profile, so they do not put themselves in a vulnerable position.

Staff must ensure that they do not post any images online that identify children who are pupils at the Provision.

8. Social Contact

Staff should not establish or seek to establish social contact with students, or their families, for the purpose of securing a friendship or to pursue or strengthen a relationship. Even if a young person seeks to establish social contact, or if this occurs coincidentally, the member of staff should exercise his or her professional judgement in making a response but should always discuss this with a Senior Member of Staff. Staff must be aware that social contact, in certain situations, could be mis-constructed as grooming.

Staff should not give their personal details such as their home or email address; social network sites, or web pages to students unless the need to do so is agreed with a Senior Member of Leadership. In summary, staff should:

- Not have any secret social contact with students
- Consider the appropriateness of the social contact according to their role and nature of their work
- Always approve any planned social contact with Senior Leadership, for example when it is part of a reward scheme
- Advise Senior Leadership of any regular social contact they have with a student or parent which may give rise to concern
- Report and record any situation which they feel might compromise the Provision or their own professional standing

9. Acceptable use of Technology

Staff and volunteers will not use technology in the Provision to view material that is illegal, inappropriate, or likely to be deemed as offensive. This includes, but is not limited to, sending obscene emails, gambling, and viewing pornography or other inappropriate content.

Staff will restrict use of personal mobiles during Provision hours to designated areas (those being the staff room and staff office). They will not use the Provisions equipment for personal use.

They will also not use personal mobile phones or cameras to take pictures of pupils. We have the right to monitor emails and internet use on the Provision IT system.

10. Confidentiality

During their role, members of staff are often privy to sensitive and confidential information about the Provision, staff, pupils, and their parents.

This information will never be:

- Disclose to anyone without the relevant authority
- Used to humiliate, embarrass, or blackmail others
- Used for purposes other than what it was collected and intended for

This does not overrule staff members duty to report child protection concerns to the appropriate channel where staff believe a child is at risk of harm.

11. Honesty and Integrity

Staff should maintain high standards of honesty and integrity in their role at all times. This includes when dealing with pupils, handling money, using Provision property and facilities.

Staff will not accept bribes.

Staff will ensure that all information given to the Provision about their qualifications and professional experience is correct and honest.

12. Dress Code

Staff will dress in a professional, smart, and appropriate manner.

13. Conduct and Standards

You are under a duty to comply with the standards of behaviour required by the Provision and to always behave in a reasonable manner and in line with the guidance set out in the Staff and Volunteer Handbook.

14. Expectations for all Staff and Volunteers

- Share a firm belief that we can change students' lives for the better
- Model politeness, courtesy, and respect for all
- Challenge stigmatisation of students
- Promote an aspirational culture – 'There is no ceiling to achievement'
- Ensure all interactions with students and other staff members are positive in nature
- Address students always in an emotionally intelligent manner
- Adhere to all the Empowering Futures Alternative Education Policies
- Ensure all emails are written in a professional manner and are suitable for any audience
- To be respectful of staff and student welfare, only send emails to those that 'need to know' and only between 7am and 8pm
- Check that pupils are dressed correctly
- Attend all briefings punctually
- Read all emails (daily)

In addition to all the above, staff must:

- Adhere to the standard as set out in the DfE document 'Teachers Standards'
- Not leave a classroom whilst teaching unless under exceptional circumstances

- Take the register within the first 15mins of a lesson

- Not let students out during the lesson unless under exceptional circumstances
- Ensure planned absence cover lesson are set
- Adhere to all deadlines

15. Monitoring Arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually but can be revised as needed. It will be ratified by the full governing board.